



**REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

**OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

I am indeed very pleased and feel much honored to be part of this momentous event which is the establishment of a Confucius Institute at the University of Mauritius.

Born as far back as 551 BC, Confucius remains an icon of wisdom across the world and philosophical quotes from him come in very handy to put across important ideas and concepts. As a science teacher trainer at the Mauritius Institute of Education, myself having to impress on teachers the importance of hands-on practical work in the teaching of science to small children, I would very often resort to Confucius's Maxim:

***I hear and I forget***

***I see and I remember***

***I do and I understand.***

In his time Confucius lived a scholarly life, he was an exemplary teacher. He taught history, music and moral character. He wanted to restore order and harmony in the society which, in his time, was torn by wars. Top on his list of moral discipline was respects for one's parents [Filial Piety].

Confucius commands great respect and reverence in the world. We in Mauritius have a lot to gain from the philosophy of Confucianism. The establishment of this Confucius Institute at our most important tertiary institution – the University of Mauritius - is a most welcome development.

I gather that to date 511 Confucius Institutes and 1073 Confucius classrooms have been established in 140 countries and regions. In 2016, the Confucius Institutes and Confucius classrooms around the world enrolled 2.1 million students and hosted cultural events of various types, receiving a total of 13 million participants.

The objectives of the Confucius Institute at the University of Mauritius project are to strengthen educational cooperation between China and Mauritius to support and promote the development of Chinese language education and increase mutual understanding among the people in China and Mauritius.

It would be important here to recall that the teaching of Mandarin is well catered for by the Ministry of Education at the Primary and Secondary level. Not only is Mandarin being studied by students belonging to the Chinese Community in Mauritius but increasingly by those from other communities. Mandarin is also offered at tertiary level by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and the University of Mauritius.

The establishment of the Confucius Institute at the University of Mauritius will contribute to strengthen what already exists in terms of the promotion and development of Chinese Language Education in Mauritius. There is a felt need for

this. I mentioned earlier that above all Confucius is revered in the world for his practical philosophy of life. He put a high premium on the importance of developing moral character in the people.

My wish is that this aspect of education be looked into by the institute. We all know to what extent moral values are important and how our society is in dire need of reviving moral values among the people, especially the youth.

The philosophy of Confucius would beautifully blend with other cultural philosophies practiced in Mauritius to further strengthen our educational programme aimed at developing moral character in our people.

Mr. Chancellor,

Vice-Chancellor and,

Your Excellency it was an honor for me to be the Chief Guest at this momentous event.

I wish the Institute long life and continued success.

Thank you